

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Objection to the Specification

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract of the Disclosure because it exceeds the word limit prescribed by § 608.01(b) of the MPEP.

Applicants have amended the Abstract of the Disclosure to be within the word limit prescribed by the MPEP.

Reconsideration of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-31 are pending in this application. Claims 30 and 31 have been allowed. Claims 1-4, 9, 11, 13-15, 19, 21, 23-25, 27 and 28 have been rejected. Claims 5-8, 10, 12, 16-18, 20, 22, 26 and 29 have been objected to by the Examiner. Claims 1, 6-10, 13, 17-20, 23 and 28 are herein amended. Claims 5, 16, 26 and 29-31 are herein canceled. New claims 32 and 33 are herein added. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 9, 13-15, 19, 23-25 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,452,367 (Bick).

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have incorporated all the features of 5 into claim 1 to place claim 1 and the claims which depend therefrom in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have incorporated all the features of 16 into claim 13 to place claim 13 and the claims which depend therefrom in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 26 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have incorporated all the features of 26 into claim 23 to place claim 23 and the claims which depend therefrom in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 29 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have incorporated all the features of 29 into claim 28 to place claim 28 and the claims which depend therefrom in condition for allowance.

Claims 6-10 have been amended to bring them into conformity with the amendments to claim 1 from which they depend and are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 1.

Claims 17-20 have been amended to bring them into conformity with the amendments to claim 13 from which they depend and are believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 13.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 11, 21 and 27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bick in view of what would have been obvious of one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention.

Claim 11 is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 1 from which it depends.

Claim 21 is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 13 from which it depends.

Claim 27 is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons discussed above for claim 23 from which it depends.

New Claims 32 and 33

Claim 32 has been added to incorporate the limitations of original claim 6 into original claim 1 and is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons stated in the Allowable Subject Matter section of the Office Action.

Claim 33 has been added to incorporate essentially all the limitations of original claims 7, 8 and 10 into original claim 1 and is believed to be allowable for at least the reasons stated in the Allowable Subject Matter section of the Office Action.

Dependent Claims

Applicant has not independently addressed the rejections of all the dependent claims because Applicant submits that, in view of the amendments to the claims presented herein and, for at least similar reasons as why the independent claims from which the dependent claims depend are believed allowable as discussed, supra, the dependent claims are also allowable. Applicant however, reserves the right to address

any individual rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary or appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims as herein presented are allowable over the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, and that the respective rejections be withdrawn. Applicants further submit that the application is hereby placed in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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